

1. INTRODUCTION

The Hanover Pike is strategically located as the primary State road linking Carroll County and Southern Pennsylvania with the Owings Mills Growth Area, the Baltimore Beltway and Maryland's Southern Interstate road system. The rapid growth of the region has led to significant increases of traffic on the Pike itself, which, despite its important function, is still essentially a two lane local rural road.

The Corridor has also been subject to pressures for zoning changes to permit additional development, especially for light industrial use.

The Baltimore County Master Plan 1989-2000 in the section on the Northern Sector states that "...the natural and cultural resources of this area form a landscape that is as visually fragile as it is aesthetically refreshing... large expanses of farmland -- and small towns and villages enhance the unique visual character of this [northern] sector...."

It is the need to balance any employment and revenue benefits which may be obtained from new development against the desire to protect the natural environment and rural landscape which is the central issue in the Hanover Pike Corridor.

The Study was initiated by Councilman Ruppertsberger in response to a community desire to protect the corridor's rural quality, address safety and other traffic issues along the Pike and to explore the possibility of increased employment and recreational opportunities at appropriate locations in the area.

In the study's early stages, County staff provided information which was utilized by an advisory group to establish a list of priority issues to be addressed in the plan. From these issues, a set of land use and transportation alternatives were prepared and evaluated. The result of these evaluations form the basis of the recommendations contained in this report. In those instances where no consensus was reached, the Planning Board and County Council Public Hearing Process will provide the vehicle for continued discussion. The ultimate responsibility to resolve outstanding issues will be in the hands of the County's elected representatives. In the case of the various road alternatives, this study represents only the first, preliminary stage in a long range process which will involve all levels of government in the design, construction and funding of the upgraded Hanover Pike.

II. IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES

Three broad sets of issues were identified as being at the core of County and community concerns with respect to the Hanover Pike Corridor Study. These can be summarized as follows:

- 1. The retention of the rural character and identity in the face of development pressures extending from the Owings Mills Growth Area in the southeast, and residential and light industrial growth across the Carroll County line, in the west.
- 2. The need to address the rapid increase of traffic, especially heavy trucks along the Hanover Pike and the safety and accessibility issues which are a result in part, of the inadequacy of the current road to accommodate these volumes.
- 3. The need to control and improve the quality of development design currently permitted under existing development, zoning and environmental regulations.

III. GOALS OF THE STUDY

The Hanover Pike Corridor Study has been undertaken under the direction of County staff, in conjunction with a Citizen's Advisory Group, local property owners, residents, interest groups and representatives of both the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Carroll County Office of Planning. The following goals were set at the outset of the planning process to guide the plan.

- ☐ Maintain the rural integrity and character of the Hanover Pike Corridor
- ☐ Establish viable options for improving safety and traffic flow along the Hanover Pike (MD Route 30).
- ☐ Protect and enhance the rural villages which are located along the Pike by managing commercial growth, ensuring design compatibility and eliminating arbitrary spot commercial zoning.
- ☐ Create a range of recreational opportunities including a golf course, to serve the increasing demands generated by the growing population living and working in Baltimore County's Northwest Corridor.
- ☐ Examine opportunities in the corridor for some additional light industrial and service uses, in areas adequately served by the existing or an improved road network, and at a scale and intensity appropriate to the environmental constraints of the site and surrounding areas.
- ☐ Develop a set of design guidelines to ensure high standards of appropriate rural development throughout the corridor.